

**Revised Agenda
Special City Council Meeting
Wednesday September 30, 2020, 7:00 PM
Remote Meeting/Live stream on Bev Cam**

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Beverly City Council, Committee of the Whole will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on the City of Beverly's website, at <http://www.beverlyma.gov/events/category/city-meetings/#>. For this meeting, members of the public who wish to watch and listen to the meeting may do so in the following manner: Tuning in the BevCam on Channel or watching BevCam's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/BevCamTV> and clicking into the BevCam Government channel. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the City of Beverly's website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.

Roll Call of Members:

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag: Councilor Houseman

Moment of Silence: None

Resolutions:
Order # 194-Police Resolution
Order # 202-Police Resolution
Late File Order # 194A-Revised Police Resolution Cover letter
Late File Order # 202A-Revised Police Resolution Cover letter

Presentations, Awards and Memorials:

Comments by Citizens (subject to the conditions contained in Appendix A to the "Rules and Orders"):

Anyone who would like to speak at the Meeting has until 9:30AM on the day of the Meeting to register with the City Clerk. (Limit of 3 @ 5 minutes each):

Public Hearings: None

Acceptance of Minutes of Previous Meeting: None

Communications from His Honor the Mayor: None

Communications, from other City Officers and Boards:

1. **LATE FILE-Order # 205-Communication-Councilor Houseman**

Communications, Applications and Petitions: None

Motions and Orders: None

Reports of Committees

Reports of Committees: See attached Committee Reports with Actions taken noted. Note that the Council is likely to act on matters listed on the Committee Reports, unless they are held in Committee. Committees also may meet during a Recess of the full Council, and consider any Agenda Item identified herein, or on the attached Committee Reports, and report back to the full Council on such matters when it reconvenes. The foregoing matters are those reasonably anticipated by the President up to 48 business hours prior to the scheduled Meeting time. It is possible that not all matters will be addressed. To the extent permitted by law, matters may be discussed that are submitted or arise within 48 business hours of the scheduled Meeting, if they were not reasonably anticipated by the President

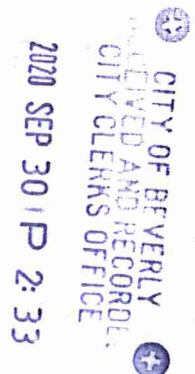
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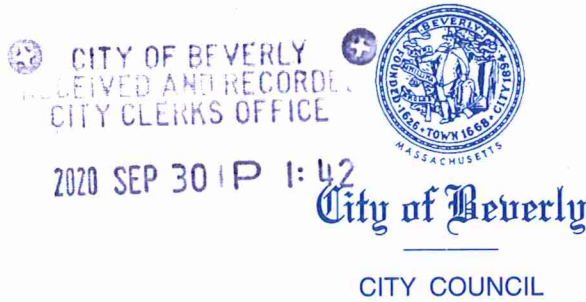
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TIMOTHY FLAHERTY
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WARD COUNCILORS
WARD 1 TODD C. ROTONDO
WARD 2 ESTELLE M. RAND
COUNCIL VICE PRESIDENT
WARD 3 STACY M. AMES
WARD 4 SCOTT D. HOUSEMAN
WARD 5 KATHLEEN M. FELDMAN
WARD 6 JOHN P. FRATES, JR.

September 30, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

This is an open letter to you, my fellow elected City Councilors. This body has an exemplary tradition of collegiality that has distinguished our meetings from other local public bodies. I am committed to keeping our collegiality alive and well. Not for its own sake alone, although disagreeing without being disagreeable is fundamental to constructive deliberation. But more than that, in this particularly divisive moment in our shared national history, as community leaders we will set the tone of how this city conducts its community affairs.

Disagreement is a natural and constructive friction to both deliberation and making progress. Accepting that there will be uncomfortable moments is part of being an elected official; it goes with the territory. But Beverly is a special community, it is generous and welcoming, with a large community spirit of togetherness. So as we proceed, I hope all of us will be committed to collegiality, as well as to constructive friction. This means being kind to each other, and particularly, being committed to listening to each other as we work through the challenges our city faces. That can mean second chances, giving the benefit of the doubt to intentions behind statements made on a sensitive and unfamiliar subject. Our community is listening to us. Let us set an example of how to talk and listen to each other. By doing so we can ask our citizens to follow our example and let the better angels of our nature prevail.

Tonight we will have a forever conversation, a conversation about race in America. I long resisted the idea that national issues belong in City Council conversations. I wanted the Council to stick to arguably objective measurement like budgets, and city management, and city planning issues. That is, to avoid social issues. But I have learned that some large social issues are local issues, and they must be addressed at the local level.

Talking about race in Beverly is not a "one and done" conversation, a resolution to pass, a task force report to vote on, so that we can move on. Tonight we will talk about police and people of color in Beverly. But as long as we are imperfect, and we will always be imperfect, we must be willing to continue having conversations about what is not right, about what can and should be better. As elected officials, it is our responsibility to walk across a bridge of turbulent waters, with our constituents, to reach a city of mutual understanding. Walking across that bridge will require a willingness to walk with the weight of uncertainty and uncomfortableness people of color face on a daily basis. That weight can be difficult to pick up, because for white people the source of that weight is largely invisible.

This Council has and does support the important work and service of our police department to the residents of Beverly. This Council approved an increase in this year's police department budget and voted to spend tens of thousands of dollars to build a long-overdue, new police station for our police department. That we support our police department is clear, and a matter

of record. At the same time, it is possible and necessary to say, unequivocally, that Black Lives Matter. These two statements of support do not have to be, and should not have to be contradictory. I support both statements.

But recent events have opened my eyes to what was previously invisible to me, as a white person. My support for our police department does not remove from me an understanding of why black people can find it hard to trust police officers generally. An absence of police brutality in Beverly does not change what black people see happening in other places in our country.

I am hearing from black people in Beverly that they do not always feel safe in Beverly. They say this although I, a white man, am unaware of any overt incidents here that would cause them to feel that way. But as an elected official, it is my opinion that I have an obligation to engage in conversations to understand why they feel that way. For me, I don't think this is something that should be delegated to others. I think this is an obligation of all our elected city officials.

I have heard from some police officers that they feel under siege, uncomfortable how national events may be affecting local perceptions and opinion of them. It sounds to me like morale may be low. At the same time, I have come to understand that feeling uncomfortable is an involuntary, daily experience for many black people in Beverly when they wake up every morning. Not because they have made a personal choice of community service as our police officers have, but because the color of their skin in a white world brings experiences of prejudice, preconceived ideas and ignorance. For them, saying Black Lives Matter is a way of saying they feel under siege, and an affirmative way of saying change is needed.

I hear that good, constructive conversations on race are happening in our city. They include people of color, members of the Human Rights Committee, and the police. But there remains a lack of information and clarity about when, where, and what is the goal of those conversations. Absent is a well stated commitment and articulated city policy around addressing relations between the police department and black people in Beverly, people who are our friends, neighbors, and constituents. These conversations are building bridges to better understanding between police and the community. But we are falling short in the eyes of the community, we need a better, more formal, broadly seen affirmation of an anti-racist policy by our police department. At this moment in our country, asking for such a policy should not be taken as an insult, and such a policy should not be obviously implied.

On August 25th the Mayor declared racism to be a public health emergency in Beverly and committed to "review...policies and...implement... changes to dismantle systemic racism in our community"; and to "make available specific race and ethnicity data that documents the health inequities that exist in Beverly..." And on June 6 the Mayor pledged he would report to the city the results of his review of the Police Department's "use of force" policy, by September 6 or sooner.

In his June statement, the Mayor made a personal pledge to: "seek a meaningful and transformative community dialogue on race and racism, equity and opportunity, a dialogue that is long overdue in every city and town in America. I am determined to listen, to learn, and to ... make the changes that are needed to ensure everyone in this city will feel and be safe in their daily lives."

I ask that the entire City Council take this pledge; it is a good and appropriate one. And I call on the Mayor to deliver his report, now well overdue, and make it available in a way that is broadly

accessible. And I encourage the Council to learn how we can work together as a body, with the Mayor and the Police department, to support implementation of that pledge.

The format of City Council meetings is not well structured for sensitive personal exchanges among Councilors. Virtual meetings and the open meeting law create their own challenges for such exchanges. But we can as a body pledge to work on being more aware about how we view this city as a home for all our citizens

I conclude with this: as a City Council we can help ourselves and all the citizens of Beverly by working together to create opportunities for conversations, to actively engage in learning about how others experience racism, and to create bridges of understanding within our community. If we make a pledge to do this work, we can walk a path away from divisive rhetoric and join in leadership to create positive changes for Beverly.

Respectfully Submitted,

Scott Houseman, City Councilor, Ward 4